

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0127

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION BERLIN

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 01759

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, WB, GW

SUBJECT: ALLIED AMBASSADORS' DISCUSSION OF FEDERAL
PRESENCE IN WEST BERLIN

REF: STATE 19287

1. SUMMARY: US, UK AND FRENCH AMBASSADORS HELD WIDE-
RANGING DISCUSSION OF FEDERAL GERMAN PRESENCE IN WEST
BERLIN AT TRIPARTITE MEETING JANUARY 31. AMBASSADOR
HILLENBRAND DREW ON REFTEL. FRENCH AMBASSADOR SAID
RESTRAINING FRG IN FIELD OF BUNDESTAG ACTIVITIES WAS NOT
ENOUGH; IF ALLIES WANTED TO HAVE BERLIN AGREEMENT'S
BENEFITS CONTINUE, THEY HAD TO TELL THE FEDERAL GOVERN-
MENT THAT NO FURTHER EXPANSION OF FEDERAL PRESENCE IN
WEST BERLIN WAS ALLOWED. US AMBASSADOR MADE POINT THAT,
IN PRINCIPLE, US VIEW WOULD NOT SUPPORT THIS FRENCH
POSITION ON PRESENCE, ALTHOUGH AS PRACTICAL MATTER, HE
COULD SEE WISDOM OF RESTRAINT ON FRG SIDE AT THIS
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JUNCTURE. UK AMBASSADOR FELT FRENCH VIEW WAS CORRECT,

BUT HE WAS NOT IN FAVOR OF COMFRONTING FRG WITH A HARD ALLIED LINE. ALL THREE AMBASSADORS AGREED TO REPORT DISCUSSION AND SEEK CAPITALS' THOUGHTS ON DELICATE SUBJECT. END SUMMARY.

2. FRENCH AMBASSADOR (SAUVAGNARGUES) OPENED DISCUSSION BY REPORTING ON HIS RECENT TALK WITH SOVIET AMBASSADOR YEFREMOV IN BERLIN. (USBER REPORTING DETAILS OF THIS BILATERAL MEETING.) SAUVAGNARGUES HAD BEEN IMPRESSED BY YEFREMOV'S LENGTHY AND HARD-HITTING HARANGUE AGAINST THE BUILDUP IN FEDERAL ACTIVITIES IN WEST BERLIN. ALTHOUGH HE ATTACKED VARIOUS ACTIVITIES, HE DISPLAYED PARTICULAR IRRITATION OVER THE FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICE; HE WARNED THAT THERE WOULD BE AN "APPROPRIATE REACTION" TO THE FRG DECISION RE ESTABLISHING THIS OFFICE IN WEST BERLIN, BUT DID NOT SPECIFY WHAT THE REACT MIGHT BE.

3. TO SAUVAGNARGUES' PERSONAL SUGGESTION THAT CONSULTATIONS OR INFORMAL QUADRIpartite DISCUSSIONS MIGHT BE PREFERABLE TO ANGRY DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES, YEFREMOV WAS APPARENTLY COOL. HE SAID ONLY THAT THE SOVIETS WERE NOT AGAINST FEDERAL PRESENCE IN WEST BERLIN AND WERE NOT ASKING THAT IT BE DISMANTLED; ONLY THEY WANTED NO INCREASE. HE AGAIN WARNED THAT THE ONLY WAY TO AVOID DIFFICULTIES WOULD BE FOR THE FRG NOT TO LOCATE THE ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICE IN WEST BERLIN.

4. SAUVAGNARGUES FOUND YEFREMOV MUCH STIFFER PERSONALLY AND HARDER ON THE FEDERAL PRESENCE ISSUE THAN IN THE PAST. HE THOUGHT YEFREMOV GENUINELY DISTURBED ABOUT THE IMBALANCE THAT WAS BEING CREATED IN THE BERLIN AGREEMENT BY FRG ACTIVITIES IN BERLIN.

5. THIS INTRODUCTORY REPORT OF THE FRENCH-SOVIET BILATERAL MEETING SET THE STAGE FOR A WIDE-RANGING DISCUSSION OF THE FEDERAL PRESENCE ISSUE. SAUVAGNARGUES STATED THAT THE ALLIES WERE IN A DIFFICULT POSITION BUT NONETHELESS HAD TO ACCEPT THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENSURING THAT THE BERLIN AGREEMENT WAS NOT DAMAGED BY CONFIDENTIAL

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THE ACTIONS OF ANY PARTY. HE TOOK THE VIEW THAT THE AGREEMENT DID NOT SET OUT IN BLACK AND WHITE WHAT COULD OR COULD NOT BE DONE IN THE AREA OF FEDERAL PRESENCE. THERE WAS A GRAY ZONE WHICH WOULD NEVER AND SHOULD NEVER BE DEFINED. HOW IT WAS DEFINED AT ANY ONE TIME DEPENDED ON POLITICAL FACTORS, NOT ON HARD AND FAST LEGAL INTERPRETATIONS.

6. SAUVAGNARGUES SAID THAT IN THE BERLIN NEGOTIATIONS THE ALLIES HAD DONE WELL TO GET THE SOVIETS TO ACCEPT THE ACTUAL FEDERAL PRESENCE THEN IN WEST BERLIN; HE HAD NOT EXPECTED FRG TO TRY TO BUILD ON IT. (UK AMBASSADOR INTERJECTED EXPRESSION OF SUPPORT FOR THIS VIEW). SAUVAGNARGUES SAID EVEN BAHR HAD EXPRESSED THE VIEW TO THE ALLIES THAT HE HAD NOT THOUGHT THAT A BUILDUP IN THE FEDERAL PRESENCE WAS JUSTIFIED OR A GOOD IDEA, BUT

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HE (BAHR) HAD SAID THE ALLIES COULD NOT EXPECT THE FRG TO TAKE A MORE RESTRICTIVE INTERPRETATION OF THE BERLIN AGREEMENT THAN THE ALLIES WERE PREPARED TO TAKE.

7. SAUVAGNARGUES CONCLUDED BY STATING THAT HE THOUGHT THE ALLIES SHOULD INFORM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT THAT, IN VIEW OF HIS REFLECTIONS ABOVE, NO FURTHER FEDERAL BODIES

OR ORGANS (BEYOND THE ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCY) COULD BE ESTABLISHED IN WEST BERLIN. IF THIS WERE DONE, THEN THE ALLIES COULD APPROACH THE SOVIETS AND HOPEFULLY REMOVE THE ISSUE OF FEDERAL PRESENCE. OTHERWISE, SAUVAGNARGUES WARNED THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD ALLOW THE GDR TO CONDUCT EVEN MORE STRINGENT CONTROLS ON THE TRANSIT ROUTES UNTIL THE ALLIES HAD TO REQUEST QUADRIPARTITE CONSULTATIONS AS PROVIDED FOR IN THE BERLIN AGREEMENT. AT THAT POINT, THE ALLIES WOULD END UP IN A RENEGOTIATION IN WHICH THE PROBABLE OUTCOME, AS BAHR HAD RECENTLY PREDICTED TO

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SAUVAGNARGUES, WOULD BE A DEAL IN WHICH THE ALLIES WOULD BLOCK FURTHER EXPANSION OF PRESENCE IN EXCHANGE FOR NO TROUBLE ON THE ACCESS ROUTES. SAUVAGNARGUES SAID THE ALLIES SHOULD MOVE TO DEFUSE WHAT WOULD BE POTENTIALLY A CRISIS SITUATION BEFORE IT PRESENTED ITSELF BY TAKING ACTION WITH THE FRG NOW.

8. AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND SAID THAT HEDID NOT SHARE SOME OF SAUVAGNARGUES' INTERPRETATIONS OF WHAT THE BERLIN AGREEMENT PERMITTED. DRAWING ON REFTEL, HE SAID THAT WASHINGTON WAS NONETHELESS PREPARED TO COUNSEL RESTRAINT TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ON CERTAIN BUNDESTAG ACTIVITIES, SUCH AS THE PROPOSED PRESIDUM AND COUNCIL OF ELDERS MEETINGS. AS FAR AS TELLING THE FRG THAT NO FURTHER BUILDUP IN FEDERAL PRESENCE WAS TO BE PERMITTED IN WEST BERLIN, HE HAD VERY SERIOUS RESERVATIONS, BOTH IN PRINCIPLE AND IN PRACTICAL TERMS. FOR ONE THING, HE CONSIDERED THAT THE AGREEMENT DID PERMIT A MEASURED ENHANCEMENT OF THE PRESENCE: CERTAINLY NOTHING IN THE AGREEMENT PROHIBITED IT. ON A PRACTICAL BASIS, IT WOULD PLACE THE ALLIES IN A MOST DIFFICULT POSITION IF THEY WERE NOW TO TELL THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, ALMOST TWO YEARS AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF THE AGREEMENT, OF NEW STRICTURES ON ITS ACTIVITIES IN BERLIN.

9. AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND SAID THAT ON A PERSONAL BASIS HE COULD ENVISAGE A MORE GENERAL APPROACH TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN WHICH THE ALLIES MIGHT NOTE THAT: (A) THEY WISHED FULL AND TIMELY CONSULTATIONS ON FEDERAL ACTIVITIES ENVISAGED FOR BERLIN; AND (B) THEY ALSO FELT THAT IT WOULD BE IN THE INTERESTS OF ALL SIDES INVOLVED IF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WOULD CONSIDER CAREFULLY WHETHER A FURTHER EXPANSION OF THE PRESENCE IN WEST BERLIN WAS A WISE MOVE AT THIS JUNCTURE. HE THOUGHT THIS SORT OF GENTLE BUT POINTED APPROACH WOULD MAKE CLEAR THE ALLIED CONCERN ABOUT THE FRG'S TRYING TO PUSH TOO FAR TOO FAST IN THIS SENSITIVE FIELD OF PRESENCE.

10. UK AMBASSADOR HENDERSON, WHO INITIALLY HAD BEEN

MAKING SUPPORTING NOISES IN FAVOR OF SAUVAGNARGUES'
COMMENTS, SAID THAT WHILE HE AGREED WITH SAUVAGNARGUES
YN PRINCIPLE, HE THOUGHT AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND'S
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SOLUTION TO THE MATTER MUCH THE BETTER OF THE TWO.
SAUVAGNARGUES SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE THIS LOW-KEYED
APPROACH WOULD BE ENOUGH TO HOLD BACK THE FRG OR TO
SATISFY THE SOVIETS. HE EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT THE
SITUATION MIGHT HAVE TO GET WORSE BEFORE THE FOUR POWERS
FINALLY HAD TO BECOME INVOLVED. HE PERSONALLY DID NOT
LIKE THE IDEA OF FORMAL CONSULTATIONS, FOR THE ALLIES
WOULD HAVE LITTLE TO GAIN FROM THEM. BOTH UK AND US
AMBASSADORS AGREED. AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND ADDED THAT
HE DID NOT BELIEVE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WOULD RUSH
INTO ANOTHER PRESENCE DISPUTE WITH THE SOVIETS SOON:
IT HAD BEEN SOMEWHAT MAULED IN THE RECENT CONFLICT OVER
THE ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCY. HE THOUGHT THAT THE THREE
AMBASSADORS SHOULD THEREFORE REPORT THE DISCUSSION FULLY
TO CAPITALS WITH A VIEW TO SEEKING THE LATTERS'
THOUGHTS ON WHAT WAS OBVIOUSLY A DELICATE MATTER.

11. COMMENT: IT IS CLEAR THAT THE FRENCH AND TO A
LESSER DEGREE THE BRITISH ARE PREPARED TO TAKE A VERY
RESTRICTIVE POSITION VIS-A-VIS THE FRG ON THE PRESENCE
QUESTION. THEIR MOTIVES FOR THIS POSITION ARE NOT
ENTIRELY CLEAR; BUT IT SEEMS THAT THEY BOTH HOPE
THAT DIFFICULTIES WITH THE SOVIETS OVER BERLIN CAN BE
AVOIDED IF WE PUT THE LID ON WEST GERMAN ACTIVITIES IN
THE CITY. IT ALSO EMERGED DURING THE DISCUSSION THAT

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NEITHER THE FRENCH NOR THE BRITISH ACCEPT THE INTERPRE-
TIVE PRINCIPLE THAT WHAT IS NOT SPECIFICALLY FORBIDDEN
IS PERMITTED AS APPLYING TO THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT.
THEY RATHER SEE A GRAY AREA OF UNCERTAINTY BETWEEN WHAT
IS CLEARLY PROHIBITED AND WHAT IS CLEARLY PERMITTED.

12. OUR VIEW IS THAT IT MAY BE WORTHWHILE TO SOUND THE
CAUTIONARY NOTE TO THE WEST GERMANS OUTLINED IN PARA 9
ABOVE. WE BELIEVE THE FRENCH MIGHT BE BROUGHT AROUND
TO SUPPORTING SUCH AN APPROACH, AND THE UK ALREADY SEEMS
TO FAVOR IT. SUCH A MESSAGE COULD BE PASSED TO THE
FONOFF AT THE STATE SECRETARY LEVEL, PREFERABLY AT THE
NEXT LUNCHEON OF THE THREE AMBASSADORS WITH STATE
SECRETARY FRANK (PROBABLY LATE FEBRUARY). THE SAME
APPROACH COULD ALSO BE MADE TO THE CHANCELLERY WHEN
THE THREE AMBASSADORS NEXT MEET WITH BAHR (AGAIN,
POSSIBLY IN LATE FEBRUARY). SIMILAR NOISES COULD BE
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MADE TO THE GERMANS BY THE ALLIED REPS IN THE BONN GROUP.

13. ACTION REQUESTED: DEPARTMENT AND USBER'S VIEWS.
HILLENBRAND

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